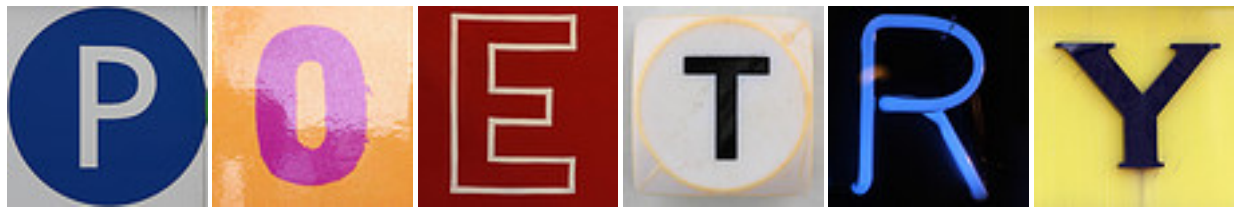


Unit of Study:



Notes by Heidi Herold
Presentation by Katherine Bomer
Heart of Texas Writing Project
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Every Day
by Naomi Shihab Nye

My hundred-year-old next-door neighbor told me:
every day is a good day if you have it.
I had to think about that a minute.
She said, Every day is a present
Someone left at your birthday place at the table.
Trust me! It may not feel like that
but it's true. When you're my age
you'll know. Twelve is a treasure.
And it's up to you
to unwrap the package gently,
lift out the gleaming hours
wrapped in tissue,
don't miss the bottom of the box.

Week 1: Reading Poems

- The students will be immersed in reading poetry.
- The students will each have a packet of poems (mentor texts). The packet will include a diverse set of poetry, mostly non-rhyming.
- The students will read and notice the poetry individually and have opportunities to talk with a partner.
- The teacher will record students' noticings on a language chart in the classroom.
- The noticings become the classroom dialogue.

Poetry

We noticed...

Week 2: Generating Poems

- **Art**

The teacher will give students stacks of museum postcards and invite students to find a piece that speaks to them. The students will write off of the art in their writer's notebook.

- **Music**

The teacher will play a piece of classical music and invite students to write off of the music in their writer's notebook. (Vivaldi: The Four Seasons)

- **Write Off Poems**

The teacher will read 3 poems and the students will let the language of the poem shower their thinking. The students will write off of the language of the poems.

- **What People Say**

The students will listen in on the conversations around them. The students will write off of the conversations they hear in their writer's notebook.

- **What You See**

The students will slow down, look, observe, and become the object.

Strategies for Generating Poetry

- Look at a piece of art, find something that speaks to you, write off of that idea.
- Listen to a piece of music, allow the music to speak to you, write off of that idea.
- Read three poems, let the language of the poems shower your thinking, write off of the language of the poems.
- Listen to conversations around you, collect these conversations, write off of the conversations you hear.
- Look at an object, slow down, look, observe, and become the object, write off of the ideas you have.

Week 3: Drafting/Revising Poems

- The students will choose 1 or 2 poems to take through the writing process.
- **Qualities of Poems (See Handout)**
 - Line Breaks and White Space
 - Mentor Text: “A Winter Poem” by Nikki Giovanni
 - Mentor Text: “Crickets” by Valorie Worth
 - Type published poem as prose and have students play with line breaks.
 - Image and Metaphor
 - Mentor Text: “Metaphor” by Eve Merriam
 - Mentor Text: “Polliwogs” by Kristine O’Connell George
 - Sparse and Heightened Language
 - Mentor Text: “When It Is Snowing” by Siv Cedering
 - Mentor Text: “Laundromat” by X.J. Kennedy

Qualities of Poetry

- Use line breaks to change the pattern of the rhythm, to slow the poem down to make the reader think, or to create suspense.
- Use white space to make a break in the information, to slow the poem down, to encourage the reader to stop and reflect, or to create a specific mood.
- Use imagery and metaphor to describe something, to surprise the reader, or to evoke a vivid image.
- Use sparse and heightened language to paint mind pictures in the reader’s mind.

Week 3: Drafting/Revising Poems

- **Revision Strategies**

- Read aloud
- See what you can get rid of
- Critical, cold eyes
- Skinny paper (cut draft paper in half)
- Play with line breaks
- Cut poem up and rearrange lines
- Free write about the poem in prose
- Write five different titles
- Read into tape recorder and revise weak parts
- Paint poems to see if visual rendering adds images

Week 4: Editing, Publishing, Celebrating

- The students will make final editing decisions.
- The students will decide how and where to publish their poetry.
- The students will practice reading poems aloud for 2 days to prepare for the writing celebration.

Mentor Texts: Line Breaks and White Space

A Winter Poem by Nikki Giovanni

once a snowflake fell
on my brow and i loved
it so much and i kissed
it and it was happy and called its cousins
and brothers and a web
of snow engulfed me then
i reached to love them all
and i squeezed them and they became
a spring rain and i stood perfectly
still and was a flower

Crickets by Valerie Worth

Crickets
Talk
In the tall
Grass
All
Late summer
Long.
When
Summer
Is gone,
The dry
Grass
Whispers
Alone.

Mentor Texts: Image and Metaphor

Metaphor by Eve Merriam

Morning is
A new sheet of paper
For you to write on.
Whatever you want to say,
All day,
Until night
Folds it up
And files it away.
The bright words and the dark words
Are gone
Until dawn
And a new day
To write on.

Polliwogs by Kristine O'Connell George

Come see
What I found!
Chubby commas,
Mouths Round,
Plump babies,
Stubby as toes.
Polliwogs!
Tadpoles!

Come see
What I found!
Frogs-in-waiting-
Huddled in puddles,
Snuggled in mud.

Mentor Text: Sparse and Heightened Language

When It Is Snowing by Siv Cedering

When it is snowing
the blue jay
is the only piece of
sky
in my
backyard.

Laundromat by X.J. Kennedy

When Mom goes to the laundromat
I come along. I'm old
Enough to carry stacks of stuff
And I know how to fold.
We shell out quarters. Underwear
Swirls in a soapy waltz,
Socks leapfrog over other socks,
Pop's pants do somersaults.
We drag 'em out. The dryer drum
Starts overturning. See
My bathrobe rock-and-rolling round—
More action than TV!
And when at last we're driving home
I dream beside a pile
Of fresh clean clothes and toast my face.
Hey, that's my favorite mile.

Teaching Resources

- For the Good of the Earth and Sun by Georgia Heard
- Awakening the Heart: Exploring Poetry in Elementary and Middle School by Georgia Heard
- Climb Inside a Poem by Georgia Heard and Lester Laminack
- Poetry Matters by Ralph Fletcher
- Poetry: Powerful Thoughts in Tiny Packages by Lucy Calkins and Stephanie Parsons